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Campus and Workplace Culture Survey [1]



What is the CWC Survey?

The University of Colorado system and campuses launched the Campus and Workplace Culture (CWC) Survey fall of 2021. The University of Colorado is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all members of our community feel respected, supported, and valued. The purpose of the Campus and Workplace Culture Survey is to gather information from CU students, staff, and faculty about their academic, workplace, and residential environments.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are integral parts of the CU strategic plan and specific metrics will result from the initial survey and action plans developed post-survey. Progress will be monitored through metrics, action plans and future survey administration. We will use the results from this survey to better understand our existing culture and to identify both strengths and areas of concern in order to make recommendations for creating and sustaining a just, equitable, and inclusive culture at CU.

In 2019 CU launched the Diversity Engagement Survey (DES). DES was an initiative of the Board of Regents and administered by a third party. The survey had a low participation rate of 14% overall and 15.4% for Boulder, 8.8% for UCCS, 9% for Denver, 18.8% for Anschutz, and 48.3% for the system. In addition, the survey was not originally developed to have demographic questions on political affiliation or political philosophy, both of which are protected class groups at CU. After consulting with system and campus leaders, CU decided to transition to the Campus Workplace Climate Survey (CWC) which has already proved to have a participation rate between 53%-73% for faculty, staff and students on one of our campuses and allows us to have a more representative look at the extent to which protected classes feel respected, supported, and valued at CU.

Campus CWC Survey Sites

CU Boulder [2]

UCCS [3]

CU Denver and CU Anschutz [4]

CU System [5]
Only available to CU System employees

FAQs

Why is the university doing this survey?

The University of Colorado System is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all members of our community feel respected, supported, and valued. The purpose of the Campus and Workplace Culture Survey is to gather information from the University of Colorado's students, staff, and faculty about their academic, workplace, and residential environments.

The results from the CWC survey will be used to better understand the existing culture and to identify both strengths and areas of concern, in order to make recommendations for creating and sustaining a culture that is fair, inclusive, and respectful at the University of Colorado.

When will the survey take place?

Students, staff, and faculty will be invited to participate in the system-wide administration of the CWC Survey which is administered every four years. The exact timing of the survey implementation is determined by each campus.

Who is administering the survey?

At System Administration, the survey will be administered by the Office of Collaboration in partnership with the Office of Institutional Research and Employee Services, which adheres to best practices in survey methodology and data security standards. For questions about survey administration on other campuses, please contact your designated Institutional Research partners.

What steps are being taken to protect the anonymity of my survey responses?

We know that individuals must have assurance that their responses are confidential and secure if we are to receive accurate and candid feedback. Survey participants' privacy is of utmost importance to us, and strict internal safeguards are in place to ensure that privacy.

For System Administration, no one outside of the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) – no administrators —has access to survey respondents' identities or to files that may connect names or email addresses with answers to survey questions.

Members of the OIR Assessment team will manage the survey email distribution list, wherein it is recorded who has and has not completed the survey questionnaire.

Once a participant submits their survey, the identifying information that permitted the database manager to keep track of who did and did not respond to the survey is automatically deleted. **In other words, each case in the final data file is an anonymous case**. In addition, the data file is encrypted and stored in a secure, encrypted drive which only OIR assessment staff can access.

Questionnaire responses will be aggregated for statistical analysis and reporting. We will aggregate the data to **groups of 10 or more** responses in order to maintain the anonymity of survey participants. If any demographic group or combination of group characteristics has fewer than 10 individuals, those data will not be reported. OIR will not provide any findings that would risk making someone identifiable due to the uniqueness of their demographic characteristics, years at CU, faculty rank, job category, or a combination of those factors. Your anonymity is our first duty of care and will be protected in all reports resulting from this survey. We are committed to ensuring that individuals can provide candid feedback with confidence. Anything else is counter-productive to the effort.

Should you have questions or comments, please email ir@cu.edu [6].

How secure are my data?

The CU System Office of Institutional Research currently safeguards any sensitive employment and student data it accesses by using state-of-the-art data security protocols. The survey platform, Qualtrics, meets Vendor Security Assessment Questionnaire [7] (VSAQ) data standards. Data are encrypted in transit and at rest. Read more about Qualtrics security [8] . Once the survey has closed, data will also be encrypted in transit to OIR. The full database

of anonymized responses will then be held by OIR in encrypted form on their secure server. The *de-identified* data will be stored to allow investigation of trends by comparison with future surveys.

Should you have questions or comments, please email ir@cu.edu [6].

How was the survey developed?

The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) and the Office of Data Analytics (ODA) at CU Boulder, along with many campus partners worked together to develop and refine the survey; over 5,000 CU Boulder students, staff, and faculty participated in the three-year pilot testing phase of development.

This survey builds off of the CU Boulder undergraduate and graduate student 2014 Social Climate Surveys and the CU Boulder 2015 Sexual Misconduct Survey. These student-focused questions were then used to create comparable questions for faculty and staff so that we will have a more complete picture of our University culture.

In addition, the survey includes questions that are drawn from surveys used at other colleges, universities, and scientific institutes. We also developed new questions to assess our campus community environments, for instance items asking about experiences of behaviors that negatively impact the workplace, classroom, and living environments.

How does this survey fit in with other campus surveys related to culture or climate?

The Campus and Workplace Culture Survey is designed to consolidate our system “climate” surveying efforts in order to support programs, departments, colleges, divisions, institutes, and the campuses at-large in comprehensively measuring our campus culture at all levels and among all constituents.

The Campus and Workplace Culture Survey will serve as a tool to support the system Strategic Plan by providing benchmarking data for all campuses and, going forward, evidence of progress towards meeting the goals of creating a more inclusive CU community.

How will the survey be administered?

A unique survey link will be sent to your CU email address. The link will take you to the online survey in Qualtrics, a state-of-the-art survey platform used by the System.

Will everyone get the same survey?

At system, every employee will received the **staff** survey. We will not have multiple versions.

There are different versions of the survey and each one has been tailored to the needs and experiences of each constituent group. In this administration, faculty, staff, and students will receive different, but comparable versions of the survey.

How long will it take to take the survey?

The survey should take about 10-20 minutes to complete—the time needed to complete the survey varies due to certain answers to some questions prompting follow-up. Those who have more to share may take a little longer. If you need to leave the survey before completing your answers, Qualtrics will save your place, and you can pick up where you left off by clicking the same link that came with the email that invited you to participate in the survey.

Is the survey accessible to a screen reader?

Yes, it is. The survey will be administered through Qualtrics, an online survey platform. CU's Office of Information Technology (OIT) has tested Qualtrics' compatibility with screen readers extensively. Only question types that have been tested and shown to be accessible are used in the Campus & Workplace Culture Survey. Learn more about screen reader compatibility [9].

May I take the survey on my smartphone or mobile device?

Every effort will be made to ensure that it is possible to take the survey on a mobile platform. However, it is more difficult to review and complete the survey on a smartphone. It is highly recommended that you complete the survey on a computer for the best formatting and ease of use.

What kind of questions are on the survey?

The questions address the culture of the workplace, as well as experiences of negative treatement and protected-class harassment and discrimination. There are also demographic questions because we know that members of different groups may be having different experiences in the workplace. Demographic questions have been developed in collaboration with campus experts to be both sensitive and useful. Results for demographic groups will not be shared if there are fewer than **10 members in the group**. We will not present data that is broken out in a way that could inadvertently identify individuals.

The majority of questions are asked on a 6-point disagree-agree (Likert) scale.

Are there any open-ended questions on the survey?

We will not be asking any open-ended questions on this survey. From past experience, we know that some people will report behaviors that will make it necessary to break the confidentiality agreement because of the seriousness of what they disclose. Examples from the past include survey respondents telling us about illegal behavior like sexual assault or research/fiscal misconduct committed by someone in their department and this has triggered an investigation. Throughout the survey, there is information on how to officially report problematic behavior or reach confidential resources, along with links that can take people directly to those offices.

What kind of response rate are you hoping for?

In our testing to date, the response rates across units has ranged from 60-100%. We hope to replicate this robust response in order to make the most of the survey findings.

What are the benefits of participating in the survey?

Due to the strict confidentiality of survey responses, the results of this survey will not benefit anyone personally. However, we hope that students, staff, and faculty will benefit as recommendations arising from this study are adopted by the system and at the campus, college, department, institute, or program unit levels.

Ultimately, this work will direct CU's efforts to create more inclusive environments for all students and employees—specifically, environments that attract more diverse and talented people to join our community and that increase student and employee retention. This survey is also intended to benefit the wider community by providing the data needed to take steps to improve the academic and workplace cultures on our campus and to measure our progress going forward.

What will happen after the survey closes?

Staff members in the Office of Institutional Research will close the survey and work with the Office of Collaboration and use the de-identified data set to perform both descriptive and in-depth analyses and will generate a report in Tableau with findings and recommendations for amplifying areas of strength and addressing problems and concerns.

Office of Collaboration will work with Employee Service and System Administration departments to develop an action plan to address concerns and to create accountability.

What if I would like to report my experience of protected-class harassment or discrimination?

The information you disclose in this survey will not initiate a formal process of investigation into situations involving protected-class discrimination or harassment, as it does not constitute an official report to the university.

The university is committed to providing an inclusive environment where all individuals can achieve their academic and professional aspirations free from discrimination and harassment based upon protected-class identities. Identities that are covered by CU policy are race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, and political philosophy.

To formally report an incident of protected-class discrimination or harassment, please call the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127; email cureport@colorado.edu [10]; or use the online reporting form [11]. If you are reporting about something that happened directly to you, there is the option to report anonymously using the online reporting form. *However, responsible employees reporting for someone else may not report anonymously*.

Anonymous reports related to concerns about campus academic, research, or business

integrity or environmental health and safety can be submitted at the CU System EthicsPoint website [12].

What if I would like to speak with someone confidentially about some of the issues raised in this survey?

You do not need to make a formal report to the university in order to receive *confidential* support.

The CU System uses the Ombuds Office at CU Denver/Anschutz to assist all members of our community with informally and impartially resolving complaints or disputes with other individuals, offices, or departments within the university. They are independent of any department or office. Visit the Ombuds Resources [13] page for more information.

The Colorado State Assistance Program (C-SEAP) and Faculty & Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) offers counseling and programs for university faculty and staff. All FSAP staff are trained as generalist counselors and are equipped to deal with a wide range of personal and work-related issues. Visit the Employee Resources [14] page for more information.

What are the protected classes at CU?

- **Race**
  Federal civil rights laws do not define race. However, all people have a race or are multiracial and can self-identify. All races are protected under university policy.
- **Color**
  Refers to the pigmentation of one's skin. An individual can make an allegation of color discrimination or color harassment against someone of the same race or color.
- **National Origin**
  Refers to a person's or a person's ancestors' place of origin or to the physical, cultural, or linguistic characteristics of an ethnic group.
- **Sex and Gender**
  Sex refers to the anatomy and biology that determines whether one is male, female, and/or intersex. Gender refers to the social constructs surrounding gender roles.
- **Gender Identity**
  Refers to an innate sense of one's own gender, or an internal sense of who one is, regardless of anatomy.
- **Gender Expression**
  Refers to how a person represents or expresses one's gender to others through external appearance, characteristics, or behaviors typically associated with a specific gender.
- **Sexual Orientation**
  Refers to the physical or emotional attraction toward a certain sex or gender. Additionally, individuals are protected from discrimination or harassment based on a perception of an individual's sexual orientation, even if that perception is mistaken.
- **Disability**
  Refers to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual. The policy also protects individuals who are regarded as having a disability or who have a record of a disability.
- **Pregnancy**

Individuals who are pregnant, just gave birth to a child, or suffer a medical condition as a result of pregnancy or childbirth are all protected.

- **Veteran Status**
  Refers to anyone who serves or who has served in any branch of the United States armed forces, including students in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). Volunteers for military duty must be treated the same as those who are ordered to active duty.
- **Political Affiliation**
  Refers to a person's membership or association with others in commonality of political purpose and support.
- **Age**
  Refers to discriminating against individuals because of their age, regardless of their age. Students are protected from age discrimination in academic situations like admissions decisions and residence hall assignments.
- **Religion/Creed**
  Refers to religious, moral, or ethical beliefs that are sincerely held and includes all aspects of religious observance and practice.
- **Political Philosophy**
  Refers to a person's belief or endorsement of any system of thought pertaining to public policy or the administration of governmental functions.

Groups audience:
Office of Collaboration

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/campus-and-workplace-culture-survey

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/campus-and-workplace-culture-survey
[2] https://www.colorado.edu/leadershipsupport/campus-culture-survey-results
[3] https://belonging.uccs.edu/cwc-survey-2025 [4] https://www.ucdenver.edu/offices/institutional-research-and-effectiveness/surveys/cwc-survey
[5] https://cu0.sharepoint.com/sites/CUSystemConnect/SitePages/Culture-and-Workplace-Survey-(CWC).aspx [6] mailto:ir@cu.edu [7] https://opensource.google.com/projects/vsaq
[8] https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/ [9] https://oit.colorado.edu/services/business-services/qualtrics/accessibility [10] mailto:cureport@colorado.edu
[11] https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PnqVK4kkIJIZnf [12] https://www.cu.edu/ethicsline
[13] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/collaborative-hr-services/cu-system/employee-resources/ombuds-resources [14] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/collaborative-hr-services/cu-system/employee-resources